

SECRET

8 December 1983

NOTE FOR: Bob Gates, C/NIC
FROM: Hal Ford, NIO At Large
SUBJECT: The NID

A few thoughts, based especially on reactions to the NID I have observed over the years from customers elsewhere in town. The familiar complaints we must most undermine are the mixture of "ho-hum, I've already seen most of this in the Times and Post," and "this daily scatter of pieces which the giant vacuum cleaner has happened to pick up in the last 24 hours isn't too helpful."

The following suggestions might have some value in pointing up what intelligence is contributing that is unique in the way of (a) collection and (b) analysis:

1. Split each NID into four sub-sections:

(a) The first might be titled New Information. Confine such items to those that are indeed unique, items which customers will not have seen elsewhere. That is, sexy new data collected from SI, or TK, or DDO, or (occasionally) other sources. Add comments pointing up the significance of each item, and use lots of photos, graphics, maps, and the like.

(b) The second part might be titled Comment. This would include items where (1) there is some intelligence which augments public knowledge of this or that development in the world (making it clear in each case which is which); and (2) short bursts of strictly intelligence comment on or interpretation of items which are public knowledge.

(c) The third part would be Articles, about as at present and perhaps one per issue.

(d) The fourth might be titled Recent Intelligence Assessments. Here give very boiled down versions of the KJ's or conclusions of recent NIE's, IA's, and, where merited, DIA or other pubs. These would be short teasers, to let customers know not only what has been produced, but what the bottom line messages or judgments are.

SECRET

CL BY SIGNER
DECL OADR

SECRET

2. Overall:

(a) Err on the side of less items rather than more, in each issue of the NID, confining the entries to the significant and the deserving. Each issue would not necessarily have to have all four of the above, only those that qualified that particular day.

(b) Push the analysts/authors to show more awareness, where applicable, of the US ingredient in and the broader setting of the foreign developments being examined. This is a contribution which INR's special daily does fairly well. We couldn't perhaps go as far as they do, but the NID articles could profit from letting readers know that we know that each item is not just some stark, isolated event taking place in a vacuum, or standing all by itself.

Good luck on the venture.


Hal Ford

cc: VCs/NIC
AG (KG)
Chrono

2
SECRET